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A MAN IN CONFLICT WITH SOMETHING AND THE TANGLED WEB



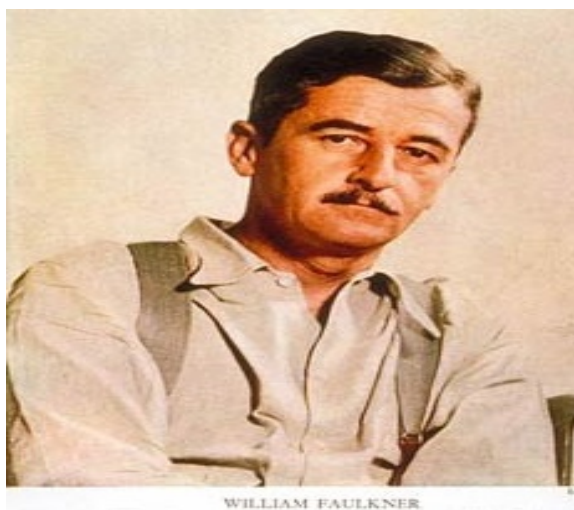
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ABSTRACT

William Faulkner is one of the most successful novelists of this century because of the sheer imaginative wealth of the fictional world he has created Human life could be the only theme of all fiction and William Faulkner always remained obsessed with multiplex and diverse way of life. Faulkner's novels read in the general order of its composition reveals that it was a long time before he came to believe in the possibility of social justice and individual happiness. His concerns with violence of war and pervert sexual relationships, the ruined wilder's and gruesome social imbalances and injustices are seen all through his fiction. His vision of life is not restricted to a particular people and place, but they are the verities that anyone, anywhere in the world is most concerned about Faulkner's world is like a vast autobiography not of one isolated individual but of a whole land of a whole human group.



WILLIAM FAULKNER

KEYWORDS: *Human life , social justice and individual happiness , Modern man's possibility and considering.*

INTRODUCTION :

Past always hovers upon the brooding present and Faulkner is filled with the reminiscences of native land. What his work reveals "is not the murky depth of an individual self, but a collective subconscious. Which is flushed to the surface?"

James M. Cox is representing the same nation a little precisely, when he says, "Faulkner's world is a world relationship of blood and kin, of time and history of land and region of race and sex of will and deeds, and taking support of his southern heritage what he did was to bring forth 'The plight of modern man, which is also 'Modern man's possibility and considering, "What he called him postage

stamp of soil he conveyed it to the world not merely a region but a realm. Although not the whole of it, Faulkner's achievement as a novelist is singularly marked by the creation and marvelous peopling of a mythical county in north Mississippi called YOKNAPATAWPHA, of which the county seat is Jefferson. The task of making this world occupied Faulkner from 1925 until his death in 1962. The major portion of the task was accomplished in the seven or eight years during which he published *Sartoris* (1929), *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *As I Lay Dying* (1930), *Sanctuary* (1931), *Light in August* (1932), *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936)

The world which takes shape in these eight novels, the first cycle of the YOKNAPATAWPHA saga is a Balzacian representation of southern history. But it is more profoundly the embodiment of Faulkner's imagination of history and myth as modes of human existence. His vivid images of the futility of the struggle against history are unforgettable. Quentin Compson in *The Sound and The Fury* wrecking his watch, Boon Hogganbeck at the end of "The Bear" desperately trying to reload his rifle so that he can kill the converting squirrels, Will Varner at the beginning of the Hamlet setting in his flour barrel chair in front of the ruins of the Old Frenchman's place, Flem Snopes at the end of the Hamlet riding by contemptuously with Eula Varner, his earth goddess bride on their way to Jefferson but Faulkner refused to seal his vision of the human struggle in images of history's inexorability. Although it is implied as early as the Dilsey section of *The Sound and The Fury*, the Faulkner myth of man is not deliberately formulated until *A Fable*.

The Jefferson county came into being in 1833. Around 1900 in YOKNAPATAWPHA Sutpen is survived by a mulatto idiot Jim Bond. Compsons were doomed to promiscuity, suicide and poverty. Quentin Compson's daughter fled away with a pitchman of a touring carnival and Benjy was sent to state asylum at Jackson in 1933. Amongst the Sartoris Aunt Jenny – the much adored character of Faulkner, appears in 'There was a Queen' Bayard of 'The Unvanquished' stories is killed in a automobile accident in 1920. Ike McCaslin lives a solitary life... hunting and fishing. The violence of the war is the central theme of the stories such as 'Ad Astra, Victory, Crevasse' and all the dead pilots.

Faulkner described *The Sound and The Fury* as the tragedy of two lost women Caddy and Quentin, the mother and the daughter in this turbulent tragedy a passion and rebellion, confusion and Chaos. Dilsey provides the only point of stability. Negroes are always part of his mechanized society but their patience and endurance is remarkable. Their relationship with whites and amongst themselves is worked out in some of the most moving stories of "Go Down Moses." Lucas Beauchamp – The unforgettable and the most vivid of Faulkner's characters appears in 'Fire and the Hearth' in contrast to his white master Mr. Edmonds, Reder, is equally strong and a little more emotional and appealing to any reader of *Pantaloon in Black*. In his heart of hearts the prevalent violence, sex and the grim and morbid racial issues that were obliterating the growth of a normal society perturb him. This conflict with something carves the germ, which Faulkner's expostulated in his novels. The themes mentioned in this discussion are often interfused in the works.

'A Rose for Emily' one of the most popular novels in American letters is also the most grim and yet touching story in all English literature of the disaster that may attend a denial of natural affection. In the words of its author the story was another sad and tragic manifestation of man's condition in which he dreams and hopes in which he is in conflict with himself or with his environment or with others. In this novel, there was the young girl's Emily Grierson, with a young girl's normal aspirations to find love and then a husband and a family, who was brow-beaten and kept down by her father, a selfish man who did not want her to leave home because he wanted a housekeeper, and it was a natural instinct of repression which – you can't represent. In fact, the story has violence, sex and horror fused with the evil of social indifference and rotten family fabric that deeply touches the human sensitivity. Emily,

frustrated by the repression kills her lover, Homer Baron, and more horrifying than that she also spends night, embracing the corps. Walter Allen has characterized the corruption and degeneracy as an exceedingly powerful metaphor for the lost bewildered ruined past war South." The Theme recurs in that Evening sun" too but there it is fused with the initiation of the Compson children. These children also bequeath the sinking world – the inefficient and alcoholic father and the somnolent mother. However the family is had by the devotion of the Negro cook Dilsey (best manifested in the novel *The Sound and The fury*). Nancy in this story remains the central sufferer hovered by the horror of Jesus threat to kill her, Pitcher's analysis of the story shows that it is abortion which a grater sin than promiscuity and drug addiction which haunts Nancy and for which she expects death from Jesus.

Last but not the least, the all encompassing theme of racial issues is the kernel of Faulkner's novels. The theme of race relation is varied complex of human invention with its characteristic vigour and fallibility where the sufferer knows not who is to blame and for what.

Truly, Faulkner was exaggerating how did the literary artist react to these issues and especially to the gruesome nostalgia of Civil war which was fought for the benefit of blacks and in which they also participated. Faulkner's struggle to clarify relationship to examine the intricate ties between races on a philosophical social and biological level, he concentrates on black characterization with an intensity and seriousness unknown in earlier white American fiction. "And Go Down, Moses" is a good example to begin with the study of race relations in Faulkner's works.

The Fire and The Hearth is a story of Lucas Beauchamp. Both Lucas and Lack are descendents of Carothers M Caslin. They grow up together almost like brothers? *The Fire on the Hearth* is recurring symbol of life and love. Lucas built the fire on his wedding day and continued it even after his married life was jeopardized by Zack Edmonds. Some six months later Lucas goes to Zack to claim his wife back. As the tension deepens the situation takes a sharp turn and both of them indulge in a duel which too, ironically takes peace on the bed. Although there is no denying of the kinship The tangle of emotions for Lucas is two fold she is doomed to live with both types of the blood the black as well as white.

Pantaloon in Black is another story with subtle descriptions of Negroid Vigor and Valor – the physical force with which Rider fights back the grief of his wife's sad and too early demise. She does within six months after their marriage. Riders as we are told in the very beginning is better than six feet and weighted better than two hundred pounds and the speed with which he threw dust in the grave of his dead wife made the mound seem "rising of its own volition."

It is only through rigorous physical action that he can try to pacific his grief. Alcohol and gambling finally lead him to prison house for murdering a white man. Rider's fury is neither black nor white but is sprang from his spiritual belatedness caused by the death of Mannie.

Pantaloon in black also presents a contrast between the marital relationship of Rider and the Sheriff. The Latter Violent reaction to the behaviour of the farmer, "Them damn Niggers buffaloes." Fails to register the depth and love between Rider and his wife Mannie. This black love so intense and so specific is further exemplified in 'Go Down, Moses.' A story of measurless love and compassion. There is marked similarity between the Sheriff of *Pantaloon in Black* and Stevens of 'Go Down Moses' both fail to comprehend the true meaning and feeling of love or grief.

'Dry September' is another powerful story where Faulkner attempt to depict a world that touches the heart. Will Mayes is alleged of raping a white woman Minnie cooper. In 'Dry September' the racist consciousness has to over taken the human conscience that sanity and sobriety find the him almost place in the order of preference. Moreover not only men but women also in the whole narrative are badly struck by the vile attitude of indifference towards their fellow human beings. In fact it is not Minnie or any other woman for that matter, it is between a nigger and a white woman. It is not the act

but the person why did it or is supposed to have done it.

The central theme remains the black and white dilemma. The dust is recurring symbol of evil that encompasses the whole town. The story as a whole provides a cynosure to the racial issue in Faulkner's fiction not as a sociological document but as a literary and artistic presentation of a simple tale in the most vivid and magnificent manner. John V. Mc Dermott also affirms that the barber is "unwilling and therefore unable to sacrifice his life for the life of another. There is situation as a lack of courage to accept the situation as a warth sacrifice. Ward L Miners remarks bear special emphasis in this regard. "The fundamental tragedy in the relation between whites and the Negroes is the difference in values. Neither group well understands the value of the other nor conflicts, sometimes vaulting into grim tragedy, are inevitable."

The United States census report show that the percentage of Negro population in Mississippi almost stable figures and then there is a sharp decline. The probable causes of this downfall are various including the fear created by various organizations. The strategies adopted to maintain the supremacy of whites went into wrong hand. Moreover, the very concept of white supremacy was based on false and morbid pretensions. Faulkner has attempted this problem so artistically and so well that nobody else before him and even after him has done it. His black characters surpass all previous presentation in the portrayal. In his struggle to examine the intricate ties between the races on social, biological and even philosophical level, Faulkner focused his attention on black characterization with an intensity that white American fiction. The outstanding originality stature and structural significance of Negro portrayal puts him above all his predecessors and most of his contemporaries too.

The Sound and the Fury tells the declines of an aristocratic Southern family which had highly respectable and distinguished past. The family consists of Mr. and Mrs. Compson and their four children Quentin, Caddy, Jason and Benjy. There are a number of Negro servants also in the family. These servants are Dilsey her husband Roskes and their three sons and daughter Mr. Campson is a drunkard and he fails as a parent. Indeed he himself is responsible for the sad fate of his all children.

Evil is represented in Sanctuary as having a consistent though a specious and a motiveless, logic of its own. In light in August the problem of Evil is much more intricately treated. It is viewed from every conceivable angle of vision, involvement detachment, inner necessity and outer calm. Light in August comes to us at much higher temperature that Sanctuary. It is an exhaustive analysis of the human disposition (sadistic, masochistic, static) to create and suffer evil in their special ways, Sanctuary and Light in August are studies of the projection of evil from the inner self motivated by a desire to impose the self upon the society as against the will to remain unimpeded and unexploded. The vision of the South as a whole as a creation of this selfish and impulsive drives comes in Absalom, Absalom Dusoir Lind describes the novel as a grand tragic vision of historic dimension. Since Sutpen's error is also by extension a social one, his, life becomes a representative anecdote' of tragic human failure: Absalom is a full review of the South as a representative kind of experience. The evil emerges as, it did not Sanctuary from inspired determination to duplicate a poorly understood but passionately desired good.

Faulkner spoke most profoundly and with great concern on the race relations at the University of Virginia. His address entitled 'A Word to Virginians', collected in "Faulkner in University" is remarkable for its intensity and depth of understanding of the racial issues. At Virginia, he did not proclaim any solution that will enable the Negroes become equal to the whites overnight or that the white race would accept their colored counterpart as equal. His visions, of the past and (then) present status of Negroes, made him understand that possibly "the white race and the Negro race can never really like and trust the other; this for the reason that the white man can never really know the Negro,

because the white man has forced the Negro to be always a Negro rather than another human being in the dealing.” It would be very timely to recall what Ike says in ‘The Bear’: “Negroes are better than we are. Their vices are vices aped from white men or that white men and bondage have taught them: Improvidence and intemperance and evasion – not laziness: evasion: of what white men had set them to, not for their aggrandizement or even comfort but his own.” The Virginia speech is full of Faulkner’s concern for the racially discriminated blacks in America. And his answers bear testimony to his life-long efforts he had put in to understand the problem. Faulkner, nonetheless, held irresponsible white people, responsible for this most ugly phenomenon of human bondage. “I think that all that don’t violently repudiate what I’ve said will agree that the white man is responsible for the Negro’s condition, the fact that the Negro does not act like a Negro and can live among us and be responsible.” And how can it be possible? Could the North that won the battle with arms, extend a helping hand? Faulkner emphatically denies it saying that the North only fears him. It ought to be the same, as Ike cries in the ‘Delta Autumn’: “...No wonder the ruined woods I used to know don’t cry for retribution! ... the people who have destroyed it will accomplish its revenge.” The analogy is relevant the blacks will have to shoulder the responsibility of bearing out the curse of fathers. “We alone can teach the Negro the responsibility of personal morality and rectitude.” There is a chagrin of sarcasm that if the white man remains aloof and inert to this nostalgic state of Negroes then “we will spend the rest of our lives dodging among the five hundred unbridled horses; we will look forward each year to another Clinton or Ligate Rock not only further and further to wreck what we have so far created of peaceful relations between the two races, but to be international monuments and milestones to our ridicules and shame.” Faulkner’s work imbibed all these elements of which he spoke and propagated all his life. His literary skills blended with his historical, social and philosophical concern never let him forget the sense of responsibility he felt towards his society and towards human beings in general.

The contemporary state of the society was that of confusion, suffering from the lack of discipline and the loss of values and the sense of mission. To see Faulkner confronted the past with its historical burden, dealt with the collective inheritance of sin and guilt pride and shame, and in so doing left the world the enduring legacy of an inexhaustible voice.

SUMMARY

A Man In Conflict With Something And The Tangled Web

Faulkner created an entire imaginative landscape YOKNAPATAWPHA County, with its capital “Jefferson”. Faulkner saw the South as a decayed culture, his novels dealt with the stories of several families with interconnections extending back for generations and his character were often eccentric. His work reveals is not the murky depth of an individual self, but a collected subconscious which is flashed in the surface. Human life could be the only theme of all fiction and Faulkner’s always remained obsessed with the multiply and diverse ways of life. In his heart of hearts the prevalent violence, sex, and the germ and morbid racial issues that were obliterating. The growth of a normal society perturbed him. The conflict with something carried the germ which Faulkner’s expostulated in his Novels, and short fiction Absalom, Absalom, A Rose for Emily. The Sound and The Fury, The evening sun, The Bear and Red leaves, Pantaloon in Black, the Fire and The Hearth, Go Down Moses and Dry September.

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